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ABSTRACT

Through a grant from the National Institute of Education, a coordinated network for communication and exchange of educational information has been established in Nebraska. The State of Nebraska Information Center for Educational Resources (SNICER) was established for the purpose of improving education through effective information dissemination. The activities of the system are described in terms of information resources, linkage, and leadership. This publication summarizes the history of SNICER and provides a chronological list of its accomplishments. An analysis of the information searches conducted by SNICER during the period of February 1978 through May 1983 summarizes characteristics of users, areas of information, grade level information requested, and purposes of requests. The appendix contains the design and analysis of a study conducted before the center was established to determine the educational information needs in the state. (MLF)

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FINAL REPORT

GRANT NO. NIE-G-75-0021

STATE DESSEMINATION GRANTS PROGRAM
EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

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APPENDIX A -- A Study to Determine: Identification of Educational Information Needs in Nebraska

ABSTRACT

PURPOSE

To develop a comprehensive information and dissemination system which will continually assess information needs as well as provide information to educators in the State of Nebraska.

OBJECTIVES

To provide systems for rapid access, review, and utilization of quality information and train state and local educators in their use.

To promote the use of good quality information by Nebraskans in making education-related decisions.

To coordinate the various information resources and activities across Nebraska so that efficient, unduplicated, quality services can be made available.

PROCEDURES

Provide educators an easily accessible and retrievable method of obtaining available educational information.

Solve problems which exist in education in Nebraska by utilizing information in existence.

Access, evaluate, and utilize educational-related information being produced.

Reduce, eliminate the development of redundant, dated publications, and research.

Suppport and improve both formal and informal educational information processing structures statewide to achieve high cost-effective performance per dollar.

RESULTS

Available educational information is provided to Nebraska educators in an easily accessible and retrievable method.

Problems and concerns which exist in education are being addressed through the utilization of information resources.

Educators in Nebraska may access, evaluate, and utilize the educational information.

Research and development efforts are responsive to extensive efforts to reduce redundancy and dated materials.

Nebraska educators are trained in educational information retrieval and utilization of accessible resources.

Formal informal information processing is supported by cost effective measures.

PREFACE

Through the State's Dissemination Capacity-Building Grant award from the National Institute of Education (1978-1983), a coordinated network for communication and exchange of educational information has become established in Nebraska.

In this Age of Information, the objective of disseminating educational information has proven to be a timely concept which has had impact on national and statewide levels. Dissemination has become a key component in educational decision-making. The past five years of the dissemination capacity-building program has drawn users from all aspects of the educational public. The people utilizing the dissemination of information include; teachers, administrators (principals, superintendents), Department of Education staff, various other state agency staff, consultants, higher education personnel, education-related organizations and students. These users have gained expertise through the sharing of information resources in education with the objective of capitalizing on quality information to enhance educational research and promote improvements in education.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Prior to 1978, the Nebraska State Department of Education (NSDE) did not have an overall service to strengthen and support management through the acquisition and dissemination of information resources. The acquisition of such resources would meet user needs to enhance planning and decision-making at the local school district level and within the NSDE.

The NSDE recognized that specific services needed to be provided to coordinate various efforts in the dissemination of information. The need for such services was recognized in detail under the Special Purpose Grant, (Appendix A-Study to Determine: Identification of Educational Information Needs in Nebraska). In the Information Needs Study, specific types of information resources most often requested and needed by school personnel were identified. The results determined the improvements needed in order to coordinate information resources into a comprehensive plan to enhance the quality of education in Nebraska.

The information needs assessment identified two primary services that were needed: To provide educators with the kind of information to make management-level decisions and to resolve problems/concerns in education. Secondly, the assessment determined that the comprehensive information dissemination system should include school district personnel from top-level administration to the individual classroom teachers and support personnel.

The study also reported that communications were minimal between local, state and national personnel concerning educational resources and services which could be used to address educational needs.

Nebraska is a large, diverse, thinly populated state. It has approximately 1,100 school systems of all sizes. There is no special delivery system to spread educational information statewide. Over eight hundred of the state's K-8 school systems do not have an on-site administrator. To coordinate communications among local, state, and national personnel is a major concern in the comprehensive plan.

Considerable thought has been given to a number of options in the delivery of information. The NSDE has determined through the Special Purpose Grant that an audience of information users exists statewide and are eager to utilize an information system that would bridge the communication gaps and provide a comprehensive information service.

The Nebraska State Department of Education recognized the significance of building a comprehensive system for the dissemination of information. To build this comprehensive dissemination model became the long-range, five-year goal: To develop, operate, and maintain a coordinated network of information dissemination.

The overall purpose became: To satisfy a need by establishing and maintaining a program which systematically provides quality technical information to educators, to further coordinate dissemination activities within Nebraska, and to provide the necessary linkage between local schools and information sources to enhance education research and promote improvements in education.

To develop the coordinated network would enable the program to provide resources and services within the Nebraska State Department of Education and to all educators statewide. An effective dissemination system should assist the users to acquire needed information

resources; assist the user in establishing adequate information bases and provide technical assistance to the user to influence the outcome of the information utilization. The system should also provide access to and utilization of information resources by rural as well as city users and provide users with the development of techniques to strengthen effective and efficient utilization of information resources which are available nationally.

The National Institute of Education originated the concept of a comprehensive state dissemination system. The system was to encompass the capacity to provide information and technical assistance to solve dissemination of information problems. The system was also to encompass three major components: 1) Information Resources - to provide a comprehensive set of information resources including documents, technical assistance, data base access and practices and products; 2) Linkage - to provide users a means to contacting the multitude of resources; 3) Leadership - to facilitate securing the needed services.

2.0 PROCEDURES

In 1975, the Nebraska State Department of Education established an Information Dissemination Office. This office provided Nebraska educators with access to educational research and resources such as reports of successful programs and practices from persons throughout the United States and the world.

The Information Dissemination Office or State of Nebraska Information Center for Educational Resources (SNICER) became the core of the comprehensive plan for information dissemination. The comprehensive plan was created as a result of a study under a Special Purpose Grant also received through the National Institute of Education. Nebraska utilized the Special Purpose Grant through the main objective: To develop a plan for a comprehensive information/dissemination system which would continually reassess information needs as well as provide information to the Department of Education staff and other educators in the State of Nebraska. This objective was accomplished through four major performance objectives; 1) To identify the needs for educational information which exist among State Department of Education staff and all educators; 2) To identify dissemination procedures and techniques in other states or agencies which may serve to meet the discrepancies of the unmet information needs; 3) To pilot or field-test specific techniques and activities which will facilitate the establishment of expanded dissemination functions of the State Department of Education; 4) To develop a plan to allow the State Department of Education to provide comprehensive information dissemination services to the Department of Education staff and educators statewide.

Appendix A describes the methodology used in the identification of educational information needs in Nebraska. The recommendations were used as guidelines in the composition of the comprehensive plan for information dissemintion in Nebraska. The study findings include the following observations:

1. An active and informal dissemination network already exists among Nebraska educators. The findings suggest that any direct dissemination into this network will have indirect effects. Most probably, good information will find its way through and around the network. Second, any strategy which has as its objectives the introduction of specialized dissemination techniques and the creation of an awareness of knowledge utilization in the educational change process, will likewise have indirect effects, and the effectiveness of the network as a whole will likely improve.

2. Technical information is making little entry into this informal network. Quality control activities could correct this deficiency. Comprehensive operation of such an activity is not feasible with NSDE, but some quality control can take place. Further, NSDE should be in a position to collect the products of other agencies already involved in quality control activities. Thus SNICER will provide linkage between agencies concerned with providing quality control of educational information and the LEA's which make use of it.

3. NSDE's contact with teachers is weak and to some extent this is desirable, since much of their problem-solving work should

be mediated by the LEA's administration. However, some problems encountered by teachers are individual and are not always matters that can be effectively handled by their local administration. Local administrators already have more than their share of problems. If a statewide system for compiling and delivering information upon request, centered in NSDE, were designed to accommodate individual teachers, without their access being arduous, the linkage between NSDE and teachers would be improved.

Thus, the Nebraska State Department of Education established an Information Dissemination Office in 1978, with the Capacity-Building Grant Award. This office implemented the comprehensive plan derived from of the four performance objectives of the Special Purpose Grant.

This information dissemination system encompasses the capacity to provide information and technical assistance to solve dissemination problems.

The system encompasses the major components of information resources, linkage and leadership.

INFORMATION RESOURCES

Information Resources provide a comprehensive set including documents, technical assistance, data base access and practices and products. The following objectives underlie activities in this area:

-Maintain a recognized location in the state to serve as a contact point for educational information requests.

-Promote the concept of obtaining, evaluating, selecting, and utilizing information to solve problems in education.

-Promote the review and implementation of validated programs and projects in the school systems in Nebraska.

-Identify, evaluate and disseminate exemplary educational programs, practices and materials in Nebraska.

-Provide a systematically developed base of information on school system needs which can be used to plan and prioritize educational service programs.

-Provide the capability for school systems to quickly identify, search out, and retrieve information on topics with which they are concerned.

-Identify and categorize resources and provide information and training to educators on their acquisition and use.

-Support the establishment of Special Resource Centers for educational information.

Without the Information Resource Bases, the leadership and linkage functions of SNICER would not be of the magnitude of excellence that they are. The contract with SMERC (San Mateo Educational Resource Center) provides Nebraska with a vast array of resources at a minimal cost. The services provided by SMERC are monitored closely by SNICER staff. SMERC provides excellent, comprehensive packages of information.

Available information and access to resources is constantly expanding in order to aid Nebraska educators. Throughout the state, Special Resource Centers have been developed in areas identified as of major interest to educators statewide. Special Resource Centers in Reading, Gifted, School Management, and Multi-cultural Education have been developed. A strong bond of coordination and cooperative sharing of available resources develops through the liason activity with local district, and state patrons.

Anticipating needs and compilation of information to satisfy future concerns is a staff effort to provide for anticipated information needs of Nebraska's educators. In several cases, booklets are assembled to list resources available.

LINKAGE

The second major component of the overall plan to develop the capacity to provide information and technical assistance to solve dissemination of information problems is the Linkage component. The Linkage component is defined as providing users a means to contacting the multitude of resources. The follwing objectives underly activities in this area:

- -Maintain a recognized location in the NSDE to serve as a contact point for educational information requests.
- -Identify, evaluate and disseminate exemplary education programs, practices and materials in Nebraska.
- -Provide the capability for school systems to quickly identify, search out, and retrieve information on topics with which they are concerned.
- -Provide in-service training to members of the "Information Network" so that they can readily and efficiently access and utilize the information centers.
- -Provide in-service training for educators in the state to facilitate the use of information in routine decision-making.
- -Support the establishment of Special Resource Centers for the accession, storage and retrieval of educational information.

The communication of information is a primary concern among local, state and federal personnel. The awareness of available educational products and services which can be used to solve problems and help identify areas where educational change may result in excellence in education for all is emphasized. A coordinated communication system is developing statewide. This network is effective in identifying resources and services to continually respond to and assist in the identification of needs.

Linkers are identified as persons who serve on a voluntary basis to provide contact to local educators. The face-to-face service easily addresses the identification clarification and negotiation of a

request for information. The Linker Network is a successful liason of interested information seekers and sharers.

LEADERSHIP

The third component encompassing the capacity to provide information and technical assistance to solve problems in the dissemination of information is leadership. Leadership is defined as providing facilitation in securing the services. The objectives underlying activities in this area include:

- -Maintain a recognized location in the NSDE to serve as a contact point for educational information requests.
- -Promote the concept of obtaining, evaluating, selecting, and utilizing information to solve problems in education.
- -Promote the review and implementation of validated programs and projects in the school systems in Nebraska.
- -Provide a systematically developed base of information on school system needs which can be used to plan and prioritize educational service programs.
- -Provide in-service training to members of the "informal network" so that they can more readily and efficiently utilize information resources.
- -Provide in-service training for educators to facilitate the use of information in routine decision-making.
- -Identify and categorize educational resources and provide both information and training to educators in the accession and use of these resources.
- -Support the establishment of Special Resource Centers for educational information.

Linkage and leadership develop simultaneously. Prior to 1975, there were no organized dissemination efforts within the NSDE. It was first necessary to establish a recognized location as an information dissemination center. SNICER (State of Nebraska Information Center for Educational Resources) was established to act as a center with the

purpose of improving education through effective information dissemination. The center provides assistance, in the retrieval and utilization of information and helps educators determine needs, perform decision-making, and assess results.

In other areas of leadership, Linkers have been trained in the use of resources, to serve on committees in the NSDE, to provide information access to resources and to analyze information with the intent of providing a total outlook on topics of interest.

During the first year of the State Capacity-Building Grants Project (SCBP), major emphasis was on establishing a recognized location in the NSDE for information dissemination. Activities included the development of forms and materials to efficiently operate the office. Another major activity focused on efforts to increase awareness and utilization of the services to the educators of the state. Linkers began to be identified statewide to link the requestor to the resource and services. These linkers represented local school districts, the Department of Education, colleges and universities, educated-related organizations, and other state agencies. The linkers provided a base for the dissemination processes.

In order to keep the educational audience aware of the information dissemination activities, the project staff presented workshops throughout the state. The workshops provided indepth explanation of the dissemination services available. Most workshops "piggybacked" other conferences that were held in connection with consultants across the NSDE. The theme of the conferences directed the subject of the information that was highlighted.

Throughout the project's duration, project staff continued to present workshops on a regional basis, since it is important to consider awareness statewide.

Awareness sessions were an important ongoing activity. This person-to-person contact proved the most effective approach to "selling" the program statewide. A newsletter or awareness bulletin was distributed to educators as a means of increasing the services through contacting a large audience of educators.

In addition, the person-to-person contact continued to prove much more effective in gaining statewide requests.

The newsletter described the services and operations of the information center. Special interest topics were highlighted based on available resources. Also, the newsletter was used as a bonding communication link in keeping a two-way contact between the project and the LEA's to build awareness in the new and upcoming resources. This communication also helped identify information developed by local educators. All products and practices identified were put into the Nebraska Resource File or were passed along to ERIC for processing. The Resource File also contained products produced within the NSDE, college and university personnel, education-related organizations and state agencies which have materials to be included in ERIC. Educators statewide recognized the need for establishing a system to submit materials to a national information file.

A Human Resource File was also developed within one regional unit of the state. Over one hundred persons were identified. The State Capacity-Building Project did not budget for the Human Resource File to be established statewide; monies were not generated to continue the process statewide. Interest has brought attention to this file on several occasions; however, a commitment to its continued development is yet to be decided.

Another activity which was continually addressed was the emphasis placed on training educators statewide in the linker skills involved in accessing information resources from computerized data banks to the identification of newly identified resources. Individuals were trained to negotiate requests. This involved the development of a

concise statement of the concern or question being addressed. The training strengthened the information dissemination system through close cooperation in the efforts to communicate the needs of local educators and developing an understanding of resources to be accessed. The trained individuals became committed and confident in serving the local educators.

3.0. RESULTS

The compiled statistics are an analysis of the information searches conducted by SNICER (State of Nebraska Information Center for Educational Resources) under the State Capacity Building Grant during the period of February 1978 through May 1983.

Th~ analysis is structured in relation to the programs within the Nebraska State Department of Education. The results of the following analysis have been utilized in the identification the of needs of educators statewide.

USER

The "User" analysis describes of position of the client who submitted requests to SNICER. Efforts are made to ensure that a user is properly identified. This person is the user of the information requested. However, there may be cases, where a user identified as a Teacher Center Director has requested a search for a teacher and has not indicated that this teacher will be the actual user of the information. The top two users, administrators and teachers, comprise 67% of all users. This is a positive sign considering current ERIC efforts to develop the National Educational Practices File. It is anticipated that the information that will be contained within this file will be of particular interest to these two top user groups.

It should be noted that the majority of requests by college faculty were from those in schools of education. This shows the utilization of SNICER for potential users in the field of elementary, secondary, and continuing education, and to teacher educators. This familiarity with ERIC and SNICER before a student leaves college faci-

litates later use of the services as teachers, administrators, counselors, etc. This former student also acts as an informer for fellow educators throughout the state who may previously have been aware of SNICER and ERIC.

USER

Rank Order	User Name	% of Total Requests
First	Administrators	35%
Second	Teachers	32%
Third	NDE Staff	21%
Fourth	Post Secondary Users	12%
	TOTALS	100%

PURPOSE OF REQUEST

The primary purpose for which searches were requested was for Administrative purposes followed closely by the areas of curriculum development and classroom instruction.

PURPOSE OF REQUEST
(HOW INFORMATION RETRIEVED IS TO BE USED)

Rank Order	Purpose of Request	% of Total Requests
First	Administrative	30%
Second	Curriculum Development	25%
Third	Classroom Instruction	21%
Fourth	Proposal/Project Development	9%
Fifth	Program Planning	6%
Sixth	Evaluation	6%
Seventh	Personal/Professional Development	2%
Eighth	Other	1%
	TOTAL	100%

GRADE LEVEL CATEGORIES FOR INFORMATION REQUESTED

The grade level category was interjected primarily to help SNICER staff in structuring the computer search logic and to provide a means of narrowing the amount of information passed on to each requestor. The grade level designation is the level of the information requested and not the level of the user. It is possible that information bearing the grade level "secondary education" may have been requested by an elementary school administrator.

The category "multi-level" indicates that the user was interested in a general search of the K-12 field of education. It does not necessarily mean that the user's purpose was general or that the information was not to be used at a more specific grade level.

The level "continuing education" relates to education beyond high school that is not intended to lead to a degree. Degree related education beyond high school ran into the "other" category or "higher education."

GRADE LEVEL

Rank Order	Grade Level	% of Total Requests
First	Multi	34%
Second	Junior High/Middle School	21%
Third	Elementary	17%
Fourth	Secondary	15%
Fifth	Pre-School	9%
Sixth	Adult	2%
Seventh	Post Secondary	1%
Eighth	Other	1%
	TOTAL	100%

REGIONALLY

SNICER provides ERIC computer search services to all Nebraska educators through a statewide network of regional Linkers or contact persons. The Linkers or contact persons are within the local or intermediate units (ESU) and are not financially reimbursed for delivering SNICER services. However, these educators considered SNICER services of sufficient worth to their schools to commit the time of one of their staff members to work cooperatively with SNICER staff to facilitate delivery of the service to their co-workers.

Since some regions have more than one contact, each Linker has been assigned a code number. The individual identities of Linkers are used for internal control purposes and are not relevant for analysis purposes, only their respective code numbers are listed in our system.

Lincoln is the largest overall user group on a geographical basis followed directly by Omaha then by the Teacher Center area in western Nebraska at Sidney. The remaining regions are synchronized with population statewide.

It should be mentioned also that Linkers in the field work strictly on a voluntary basis with SNICER and are under no obligation to overburden themselves by pushing SNICER services to the point of its interfering with their obligations to their own local employers. It is a credit to all Linkers that they have been able to maintain delivery of the search service in spite of their own local commitments and responsibilities.

The differences in the number of requests submitted by region and

Linkers is due to a number of factors such as: (1) density of population; (2) geographic size of region being served; (3) variation in the activeness of the Linkers in publicizing the service.

CONTENT CODING BY NDE PROGRAMS

SNICER uses the content code to relate each search to at least one Division and/or Program within the State Department of Education. This provides SNICER and the Nebraska State Department of Education offices with a device for determining where the needs, questions or concerns are most requested. The area of curriculum is the most often mentioned area for needed information support. The area of additional instructional services is also frenquently mentioned as a major topic of concern. This "needs sensitizing" may become a prominent means of identification of the needs of educators throughout the state. Obviously, the most frequently requested areas for information are issues that need to be recognized as common concerns and/or problems of our educators.

NOTE: It should be understood that each request may be coded up to as many as four categories or program areas, for example, a question such as: "Curriculum Guides are needed for Career Development in a Foreign Language class." This request would be coded under three categories or programs at NSDE. These programs would consist of: Career Education Foreign Language, Curriculum.

TOP TEN AREAS FOR INFORMATION REQUESTS

1. Curriculum
2. Instructional Services
3. Special Education
4. Assessment
5. Guidance/Counseling
6. School Management
7. In-Service
8. Language Arts
9. Early Childhood Education
10. Reading

The most identifiable activities in the three major components of: (1) Information Resources, (2) Linkage, and 3) Leadership are:

1. INFORMATION RESOURCES

The information resources component is of primary importance in the information dissemination system. The availability of information resources allows management to serve the educators requesting information with a vast array of materials.

The most extensively used data base is ERIC, both manual and online searching. Additional data bases are searched depending on the subject content of the question being searched. ERIC is usually the only data base necessary to tap since it is so complete in a full range of information resources.

In order to effectively respond to the educator's requests, each request is analyzed in regard to: the subject/content of the request; the need for an immediate reply; and the user audience.

Information resources are constantly changing. It is necessary, therefore, to cross check each source before referring a client. Likewise, resources are constantly appearing where none existed before. It is important to keep staff and users aware of the latest and best available sources. A substantial part of the resources accessed come from sources within the state. Fulfillment of the major objectives of the information dissemination program was also a focal point in management. Since the objectives facilitate movement towards a coordinated information system, the leadership service of the program is intertwined into the dissemination system. Management provides a network of continually interacting components. This is a net-

work for sharing information resources and which provides each requestor with information selected especially for his/her needs.

The communications network statewide has proven valuable in the recognition of resources and growth of the bank of quality resources.

Special Resource Centers were expanded to contain a broad variety of educational materials for hands-on use and indepth research. These requirements were made known to the regional directors of the centers by teachers and administrators. It has been the goal of the State Capacity-Building Project to create a network of statewide mini-clearinghouses for information in topical areas of interest and concern. A strong bond of coordination and cooperative sharing of resources develops through this liaison which serves the differing needs of local, district, and individual educators.

Requests for information have also been satisfied through the reproduction of booklets on resources that accompany special subject areas of the curriculum. These booklets have been cooperatively prepared by the project, consultants at the NSDE and consultants statewide. Likewise, in an attempt to keep Nebraska educators abreast on topics of current concerns, the project lists in departmental newsletters, resources that are available to aid in the advance preparation and anticipation of needs.

The majority of information requests processed are from the local educators with teachers and administrators taking the lead. Information requests deal with classroom instructional materials in various areas of the curriculum, technology, computers in education, counseling and guidance, formulating roles and evaluations of teachers and administrators, ways to handle discipline problems, special aid

for handicapped students and materials for gifted students.

SNICER collaborated with the State Library Commission, the University of Nebraska Library, other state agencies and organizations and regioinal educational offices in activities for retrieving information.

2. LINKAGE

The communications network is accessed through a linkage network which provides person-to-person contacts statewide. This network coordinates the exchange of information between users. This linkage or delivery system is arranged within each local district of which it is a part and each operates to process the information in a way that is most effective to that local district.

This network of linkers consists of local administrators, teachers, regoinal administrators, resource teachers, college methods class teachers, and personnel in various state agencies including NSDE consultants.

Prior to the Capacity-Building Project, no system of communication existed to deliver and receive requests for educational information. The linkage network is very successful in working with the state's central office for accomplishing information dissemination.

The duties of the linker include: helping local educators identify educational problems or concerns; helping educators develop a concise statement of the issue or problem; preparing the request for information; and assisting local educators to use the information provided.

Linkers also assist in defining educational problems and interpreting research information to make it easier for the user to reach decisions or plan activities. The key to the linker's role is

to provide several alternatives to a plan or process. It is up to the user to make the ultimate decision on what will be done.

3. LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT

As a result of effective leadership, the development of a coordinated information dissemination system was accomplished. The project staff believe the leadership was enhanced through their philosophies in believing that communication is an essential element in coordination and cooperation.

Management felt it essential to address the needs identified in the assessment that was accomplished under the Special Purpose Grant; therefore, focus was directed toward acquisition of information resources for program-planning, decision-making, and problem-solving. The user audience employing these resources are school district personnel, Nebraska State Department of Education staff, college and university peronnel and other persons from education-related agencies and organizations.

When the Nebraska State Department of Education first established an Office of Dissemination in 1978, the program was staffed by two full-time professionals and one secretary. From 1980 on, the office was managed by one professional and a half-time secretary. During the project period, the activities of the dissemination program were designed to deal with a full range of information dissemination potentials including technical assistance in the use of educational resources. Information was retrieved and disseminated on request. The project director was responsible for coordinating a system of high quality educational resources that could be retrieved, easily acquired, and disseminated to the users and requestors statewide. A cooperative and collaborative participation of personnel and agencies

nationwide are part of the information dissemination system. This system provides access to a variety of national and state educational data bases from which information is retrieved. The project director is also responsible for the development, utilization and delivery of information resources to promote the operation and continuation of services statewide and departmentwide. The overall responsibility of the project is to administer the project by working directly and indirectly with all educators. Other responsibilities of the director include: The development of policies, and procedures as well as administering the creation of reports and budgets. The director is also responsible for analyzing and evaluating the information dissemination system. In-service workshops and training were conducted to facilitate utilization of services by administrators, teachers, field agents or linkers and department staff. The leadership collectively allocates resources and identifies resources to satisfy the needs of Nebraska educators. The secretary for the project was responsible for: Organizing and assembling information packets that were sent to the individuals requesting information, composing correspondence under professional supervision, maintaining records and files on project, operating various machines in connection with regular office duties, supervising and helping maintain the information collection, equipment and materials.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

It is difficult to measure the entire impact of the program in information dissemination. The improvement of educational efforts is not always immediate. The major underlying commitment of this program is to enhance the quality of education; each response has contributed to the improvement of education in Nebraska.

It is through the channels of communication and information sharing that needs are addressed, decisions are made and problems are solved. These processes contribute to the improvement of educational practice. The application of educational research and program information to specifically identified classroom situations both enhances and improves teaching techniques, and, therefore, facilitates the achievement of the desired outcome for students.

EVALUATION OF SERVICE

The results of an Evaluation of SNICER's services over the program years is very positive. In summary, 94% of the clients thought the information requests were delivered on time; 98% thought the information received was relevant and useful.

Promptness of the service:

On Time	94%
Late But Useful	5%
Too Late	1%
	100%

Relevance of the material:

Relevant	98%
Not Relevant*	2%
	100%

Irrelavant* material:

No Reply to why it was irrelevant	97%
Too Brief	1%
No Fiche Reader	1%
Off Subject	0.5%
Not What Requested	0.4%
Too Complicated	0.1%
	100%

How did the user learn about SNICER:

Project Staff	80%
Local Teacher	4%
Publication	3%
Presentation	8%
Other	5%
	100%

* In most cases information was not available, usually because there have not been in-depth studies conducted on the topic in request.

Upon completion of the program's grant, the comparison study below describes the before and after status of various activities brought about as a result of having received the grant award.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Dissemination Prior to Grant	Dissemination Upon Completion of Grant
. No organized dissemination activities within NDE or the state.	. Developed plan for a comprehensive information/dissemination system which continually reassesses information needs as well as provides information to the educators of Nebraska.
. No existance of a system to identify and prioritize educational information needs.	. Identified and prioritized the educational information needs.
	. Studied dissemination procedures/techniques in other states and agencies which may serve unmet information needs in Nebraska.
	. Tested specific techniques to facilitate the establishment of an expanded dissemination system in Nebraska.
. No formal coordination of information dissemination--lack of centralized services.	. Established an Information Dissemination Office at Nebraska State Department of Education.
	. Developed forms for operation.
. Did not have resource base access or national access to educational information resources.	. Negotiated contract with SMERC to provide computerized search packages.
	. Began monitoring information requests as submitted to identify needs, trends, areas of concern.

- No regional workshops to train educators to access resources--lack of linkage to LEA's.

- No services provided to NSDE staff to develop publications in areas of expertise.

- No central location for all information resources and publications.

- Did not create "high-interest" awareness lists available to educational public.

- Inability of schools to put their own documents into a national base to share with others.

- Conducted statewide awareness sessions relating the service capabilities of SNICER to educators.

- Began evaluation of services.

- Trained NDE staff to serve as technical liaison/linkers for SNICER.

- Conducted Linker Training Workshops--Regionally.

- Assisted NDE staff in development of publications using SNICER resources.

- Identified and categorized educational information resources available at NDE.

- Began identifying and retrieval of information resources statewide.

- Began submitting appropriate documents to ERIC.

- Began to identify and support various Special Resource Centers throughout state.

- Cooperated with McREL in sharing of information resources and identification of priority areas of information needs and development of activities in these areas.

- Monitored all information requests to identify needs, trends, etc.

- Completed Computerized Monitoring System to evaluate SNICER services.

- Completion of SNICER Monitoring System to identify needs, areas of Nebraska served by SNICER, type of educator served, etc.

- Internal reorganization accomplished to form Dissemination Section at NDE, to include NDN and Title IV.
- Conducted Regional Linker Training Conferences.
- Conducted statewide awareness by mail by "piggy-backing" onto other workshops provided by NDE staff.
- Began to share materials, services of SNICER with Title IV, NDN, and other agencies.
- Consulted with ERIC to insure Resource Fille computer-compatability to documents as submitted.
- Identified resources for Special Resource Centers across Nebraska.
- Trained persons statewide in Resource File retrieval.
- SNICER epresented on various committees and organizations to enhance educational roles and utilize services.
- Awareness workshops conducted on SNICER in conjunction with other NDE workshops and programs.
- Information sharing workshops conducted with other state agencies.
- Nebraska Human and materials Resource File started.
- Conducted evaluation of SNICER services as utilized and received by educators throughout Nebraska.
- Identified persons throughout Nebraska to serve as Linkers.

- Cooperated with NDE staff by referring clients to them and by assisting staff with newly identified resources.
- Trained NDE's new staff in information retrieval and ERIC.
- Designated target audiences to train in specific needs as identified.
- Cooperated with NDE staff by "piggy-backing" onto their major conferences to provide resources and services to their special areas.
- Shared with NDE staff listings of identified problems, concerns, questions of educator statewide.
- Continued to conduct computerized searching of information data bases.
- Identified and build Special Purpose Resource Centers throughout Nebraska.
- Conducted information campaign on top priority trends, needs in education (ie: Resources on Computers in Education).
- Assisted staff of NDE to develop publications on special topics, ie: Women in Education, Curriculums for Lab Safety.
- SNICER represented on various committees in an information capacity (ie: 4-day school week task force, student's guidance task force, etc.) at NDE and in other state agencies.
- Cooperated with other state agencies in the expansion of information bases.

- Submitted plan to establish a microcomputer center within NDE for use by educators.
- Collected data on all programs within NDE which provide dissemination services.
- Submitted "Dissemination Policy Statement" to Cabinet.
- Submitted plan for future funding of SNICER at NDE - through deposit of monies from NDE programs having dissemination function.
- Completed development of slide-tape and new brochure on SNICER services.

5.0 INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE PROGRAM

The components of the dissemination activities that were developed with federal funds continues to grow with technology in this Age of Information. Activities continue to become more a cooperative effort due to the fiscal constraints of our economy. A sharing system has been very successful in lowering the costs of disseminating information.

Although the Nebraska State Department of Education has shown commitment to a continuous dissemination of information effort, the reduction in staff time will have an impact on the maintenance of a comprehensive information dissemination service program.

The information presented below reflects the support provided to top-level management:

Decision-Making and Planning	. Provided several task forces and committees with a background of informational resources.
Informative Resource Packages	. Provided resources for the development of several publications within the NSDE on a variety of topics.
	. Provided information packages to several Special Purpose Information Centers located regionally throughout the state.
Submitted Documents for Publication	. Submitted several programs and practices for inclusion in national educational information files.
Awareness of Resources	. Held several workshops statewide to train individuals in resource acquisition and awareness.
	. Provided opportunities for inter-district sharing.

Awareness of Resources (Continued)	. Provided "timely topic" information on topics of current concern/interest to educators to keep them abreast of current educational issues.
Technical Assistance	. Provided consultants and educators statewide with information needed in program-planning, problem-solving, and decision-making at all levels. . Helped improve the use of human and financial resources. Facilitated personnel access to and use of existing resources. . Promoted a cooperative exchange of information with national, state, and local focal points.

It has been a primary concern of the State-Capacity Building Program that the development, operation, and maintenance of a coordinated system of communicating information be disseminated statewide.

Institutionalization will occur through divisional activities in dissemination of information. Each program in NDE which has dissemination activities mandated will be responsible for their own dissemination functions.

Also, the access to informational data bases will be available through several sources. NDE will maintain access to information resources through: The Source, ED-NEB, and BRS.

In June, 1982, the SCBP (State Capacity Building Project) was relocated to the Information Services section. The SCBP had previously been located in the Special Services section in the division of Instruction. The SCBP, at that time, worked closely with the NDN

(National Diffusion Network) in disseminating educational programs to educators.

The relocation places the project in the Information Services section of the Nebraska State Department of Education, which is directly under the Deputy Commissioner. The administration feels the SCBP is an informative service which can benefit all educators; therefore, the SCBP should be placed in a management and administrative position as opposed to being in instructional services solely. The SCBP serves a much larger audience through the process of disseminating information to clients statewide.

Also, the SCBP program works directly with technology, and technology has been the number one area of information dissemination for the past two years. It follows that in the "Age of Information" an information service such as provided by the SCBP should be located at the point where data or informative materials are released from the NDE.

The Department will continue to provide the services formerly provided through the project. There are two major sources that feed the dissemination system. One is information generated from within the Department; and the second is information generated outside of the Department.

A major function of all SEA's is to collect, process, use and disseminate information. Until recently, information dissemination has been one of the most difficult portions of this process. The project has allowed the department to use the computer to disseminate information available from outside of the Department; however, Department-generated information has been a different story. With the

implementation of Education Nebraska (EDNEB), we will soon have an in-state network that will provide a system for instant dissemination of information.

The Department will no longer subscribe to the Lockheed system after the end of the grant period; however, access to Lockheed will be available through the State Library Commission and through the University of Nebraska - both located in Lincoln. In addition, to Lockheed access, the Department subscribes to BRS, the Source, Special Net, and Rehab Net.

The major dissemination tool for information about these networks will be EDNEB.

APPENDIX A

STUDY TO DETERMINE:

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION NEEDS IN NEBRASKA

STUDY TO DETERMINE:

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION NEEDS IN NEBRASKA

The methodology used in this study was termed "selective interview research," SIR. generally, this meant conducting statewide interviews at non-randomly selected sites. The major activities involved are site-selection and scheduling, the development of the structured interview package, conduct of the interviews, and the analysis of the raw data obtained from the interviews.

The SIR rests upon three main ideas. One: That personal contact between the State Department of Education personnel and the educators througout the state will create an atmosphere of mutual familiarity and cooperation because of the personal nature of the research and will have long range benefits both for the State Department of Education and for the continuing operation of the information dissemination project. Two: That the best way to maximize actual usage of any Information Services System ultimately established is to design such a system to complement and evolve out of actual on-going practices of educators throughout the state and that the best way to meet this condition is by field work that is as systematic as practical considerations allow. Three: that an information collection procedure which provides for the generation and reflection of ideas among participants will provide better and more usable information than fixed response system.

We believe that it is easy to underestimate the psychological impact of a methodology based upon personal contat. The purpose of the State Department of Education and of the information dissemination

project in particular is to serve the educators of the state. Certainly vigorous objective methods are of value, and in some decision-making problems, the only appropriate means for evaluating decision alternatives. On the other hand, the services provided must be accepted and used by those for whom the service is intended Distance creates a detachment and a failing sense of obligation. Many services require a cooperation on the part of the served. Without this, there is no real service; only the motions of service. It is easy to excuse one's non-cooperative behavior if those providing the service are at such an impersonal distance that one can legitimately doubt whether they can have any real understanding or feel of the needs and problems of those for whom the service is intended. This will always be a problem, but the SIR methodology is at least an active attempt to minimize it.

We also believe that it is too easy to provide the categories and vocabulary of needs assessment such that the respondents are required to fit their conception of their needs and interests into pre-conceived categories and vocabulary imposed from above instead of generating such for themselves. This is one of the main problems of questionnaires and survey instruments designed for mass applications. The way to avoid this is to go to the people and let them inform us about how they conceive their needs and how they talk about them. a possible out-growth of SIR could be comprehensive, mass-applied instrument, but it would be one that was tailored to the population to which it is administered and not one that is manufactured to fit all possible, and probably fictitious, populations.

Probably the major objection to SIR would be its deviation from standard random sampling procedures. We believe the foundational ideas above provide a reasonable justification for SIR in itself, but methodological objections can also be answered. SIR does not have the vigor of pure research but neither it it uncontrolled guesswork.

1. SIR is based upon a regional organization scheme. The regions are designed to be: a) statistically uniform, the criterion variable being total enrollment; b) to fit reasonably well to the topographical regions which make up the state and which consequently reflect the lifestyles of the communities which inhabit those topographical regions. This is not strictly stratification, but is similar in function.
2. The schools targeted for visitation within regions could be chosen randomly; however, previous practice indicates a likely high proportion of indifference; hence, any sanctity provided by random sampling would probably be lost anyway. The target school list then will be approached in two ways: a) listing schools that respond to a solicitation for visits; b) listing schools that are to be visited by staff anyway for other reasons. This practical approach, we believe, is justified in two ways:
   a. SIR is designed to locate need and get into contact with it. Measurement of statewide needs belongs to follow up methodology. Some measurement is possible through SIR but such would have a preliminary estimate function, and not a conclusive function. Those schools that respond are indicating that they see it in their interest to have staff visit and hence, the reception of interviewing staff will go smoothly

for all involved. The interview would not be viewed as an intrusion.

b. Combining SIR with travel for other purposes is economical.

3. The interview procedures of SIR will be standardized and tested. This brings both a measure of control to the proceedings, (the same questions will be asked, the same preliminary definitions of terms and purposes will be given, and an interview result format facilitating consolidation will be agreed upon) and enables numerous and diverse staff to assist in the actual conduct of SIR.

In short, SIR is a methodology dominated by practical and psychological considerations with as much control worked into the procedures as is possible without surrendering those practical and psychological concerns. It is not a substitute for rigorous objective instruments for mass application, but it has, we believe, a legitimate rationale of its own. Further, it can be the basis for determining first, the need or worth of mass applied instruments, and second, the specific nature of such an instrument if such is chosen as a consequence of SIR.

The Structured Interview Package

The first page of the interview package provides information as to the purpose and context of this special needs assessment interview. The second provides explicit definitions of educational information, the need for educational information, sources of information, and access to sources of information. The purpose is to lay out clearly the fundamental ideas underlying the later questions. The third page collects basic data about those taking the questionnaire.

The fourth page is a list of illustrated definitions of types of

information for the respondents to flip back and forth to when filling out the Table of Information Access (Figure #1). This table is on the following page. Across the top of the table are types of information, defined on the previous page; down the side were sources of information. If a respondent received a certain type of information from a certain source of information, within the period of the last two years, then they are to enter a number (scale 1 to 4, 4 being the highest) in the square corresponding with <u>that</u> type and <u>that</u> source, ranks the value of the information received. The respondent also ranked the ease of access for each source of information, on an average, on a scale of 1 to 3, 3 representing access of greatest ease.

The next page is a series of four open questions (Figure #2) asking that the respondents enter whatever problems, projects, decisions or issues that confront them this school year. For each problem, project, or issue, they are asked to specify what type of information they would like to have in dealing with it, when they needed the information, and to what currently available sources of information they would look.

The final page lists 13 types of information services (Figure #3). The respondents are asked to check four for which they have special preference.

The package required self-recording and detailed instructions. As a result, the packages are filled out conscientiously and knowledgeably. The interviews lasted about 30 minutes and are conducted in groups as well as singly. A preliminary package was piloted early in the Lincoln Public Schools and some minor modifications were made as a result. Those of the Planning, Research, and Evaluation staff that

would participate in the statewide interviews participated in the piloting, providing the occasion to work out common approaches to the interview situation.

The Sample

Thirty-five school districts were involved and a total of 235 interviews were completed, Table 1. Table 2 gives the breakdown of the number of interviews falling within the seven categories of educational personnel used to consolidate the results.

TABLE I - SCHOOL DISTRICT SITES

School District Name	No. of Interviews Completed
*Beemer	2
Bellevue	9
*Brady	1
Broken Bow	8
Bridgeport	1
Bunkerhill-Cheyenne County	1
Burwell	6
*Cozad	7
Franklin	8
Fremont	19
*Fullerton	5
Gates-Custer County	1
*Gothenburg	4
Gurley	1
Hastings	5
Lincoln	16
Minden	5
Mitchell	1
North Platte	6
Omaha	10
Ord	6
*Osgood-Lincoln County	1
Palmyra	4
Papillion	10
Pierce	13
Prague	12
Roseland	7
Saline County	10
Seward	8
*St. Edward	4
Stanton	8
Sunol Consolidated-Cheyenne County	3

School District Name	No. of Interviews Completed
Tri-County	10
Wahoo	8
Wilber	4
Unknown	11
TOTAL	235

*Part of the Mail Campaign

TABLE 2 - NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS
PER CATEGORY OF EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL

	Number of Interviews
ADMINISTRATION	
Superintendents	20
Principals	45
TEACHING	
Elementary Teachers	51
Secondary Teachers	66
SPECIAL FUNCTION	
Counselors	24
Media Specialists	20
Resource and Special Education	9

FIGURE #1 – TABLE OF INFORMATION ACCESS

Put numbers in the squares for which you obtain that type of information from that source.

EXAMPLE:

Sources of Information \ Types of Information I. Value of Information*	Teaching Methods	Educational Materials	Student Diagnosis/ Evaluation	Educational Philosophy	Staff Development	Research Findings	School Management Strategies	State and Federal Programs	II. Manner of Access
Colleges and Universities		3		2		4			2
Information Clearing houses (ERIC, CAP)						3			1
Personal Communication with other Educators	4		3	4	3				3

Sources of Information \ Types of Information I. Value of Information*	Teaching Methods	Educational Materials	Student Diagnosis/ Evaluation	Educational Philosophy	Staff Development	Research Findings	School Management Strategies	State and Federal Programs	II. Manner of Access
Colleges and Universities									
Information Clearing houses (ERIC, CAP)									
Personal Communication with other Educators									
Association Meetings and Conventions									
Personal Communication with State Education Dept.									
Journals and other publications									
State issued publications and newsletters									
Curriculum guides									
Educational Television									
Local Libraries									

*SCALES FOR I. AND II.

I. Value of Information

1 = of no use, too ridden with jargon
2 = of minimal use, understood portions of the information
3 = usable, understood most of the information
4 = exactly what I needed, easily understood

II. Manner of Access

1 = difficult and lengthy process
2 = moderate effort, length of time reasonable
3 = convenient and quick process

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FIGURE #2 - THE OPEN QUESTIONS

Think for a moment about the decisions, problems, and issues you have recently faced. Try also to identify decisions you must make, problems with which you must deal, issues with which you must become familar, and projects you will undertake, all within the near future. These are the kinds of situations that will probably create a need for educational information.

1. State briefly the decision, problem, issue or project confronting you.

   a.

   b.

   c.

2. What would b. the types of information which would be of use to you in acting upon this decision, problem, issue, or project?

   a.

   b.

   c.

3. How quickly must this information be made available to be of use to you?

   a.

   b.

   c.

4. Where would you probably go or where would you look in order to acquire the information that would be of use to you in dealing with the decision, problem, issue, or project?

   a.

   b.

   c.

FIGURE #3 - INFORMATION SERVICE PREFERENCE

If all of these following services were available, which would you prefer, that is, of which would you make the most use.

_____ Workshops in your district.

_____ Convocations held regionally in the state.

_____ Consultative assistance from the State Department of Education.

_____ Local subject matter Specialist or "extention agent".

_____ Direct Access to Local College personnel.

_____ A statewide service that compiled and delivered copies of reports and articles upon request.

_____ A regional service that compiled and delivered copies of reports and articles upon request.

_____ Local demonstrations of educational practices.

_____ Educational television reviewing recent innovations.

_____ Printed newsletters reviewing recent innovations.

_____ Inservice training programs by Educational Service Units.

_____ Private Consulting firms.

_____ Curriculum guides.

_____ Not listed. (Please specify below).

THE DESIGN OF THE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The design of the analysis and the reporting of the results are somewhat intertwined. It was necessary to treat the table of information access, the open questions, and the information service preference pages separately. There are, though, some general things to be said about the analysis before each section is treated separately. The statistics will always be either frequencies, means, or standard deviations. No test statistics were employed. Second, the data was analyzed by categories of educators--superintendents, principals, elementary teachers, secondary teachers, media specialists, counselors, and special education and resource personnel, or overall, or both.

Overall Discussion

The major problem areas across all personnel categories are budgeting and budgetary information, Title programs and their interpretation, teacher evaluation, student management, curriculum revision and development--the dominant particular areas being language arts, the Bicentennial theme, the programs for the gifted--career education, media center updating and utliization, and student diagnostics.

The lists, however, show a very large proportion of singular problems or endeavors. This can be taken as an indication of sound and engaged professional practices by Nebraska educators. It seems most of those surveyed have clearly identified work they must do that is rather beyond simply maintaining a routine.

Aside from the particulars of the lists, shared and unique, the importance of a review function of a dissemination system is again suggested. Many of the problems facing Nebraska educators require choosing a solution from a plethora of alternatives. Most of the educators recognize the difficulties this over-choice poses for intelligent decision making, and therefore, besides wanting a mere list of choices, they desire appropriate and concomitant information about each choice, evidence in support, success rates, emphasis, expected outcomes, required resources for implementation, etc. Such additional information sets the occasion for a comprehensive decision problem for which one can weigh alternatives on critical variables.

Question #3

3. How quickly must this information be made available to be of <u>use</u> to you?

The breakdown of individual responses by personnel category showed only similarities. Therefore only the totals will be reported here -- Table 3.

TABLE 3 - WHEN THE INFORMATION IS DESIRED

	TOTAL
IMMEDIATELY	121
0-1 mo.	53
1-2 mo.	44
2-4 mo.	32
4-6 mo.	29
6-12 mo.	41
Ongoing	46

This data suggests that while some problems can be dealt with in the intermediate future, most require solutions soon.

Question #4

4. Where would you probably go or where would you look in order to acquire the information that would be of use to you in dealing with the decision, problem, issue, or project?

The lists compiled for this question were scored somewhat differently. Any source of information specified by a particular respondent was counted once, even if they listed it more than once, that is, even if they suggested that they would look to that same source for information relating to two or more of the problems they cited. This permits meaningful calculations of percentages, and second, those sources which dominate are frequently the sources looked to on more than one occasion.

By combining all the sources which specify in some sense, other educators, schools, and superintendents or central offices, 52% of all the respondents show intention to use these sources. Thirty-two percent show intention to contact the Nebraska Department of Education,

(NDE; 24% and 23% will look respectively to professional publications and colleges and universities. With the exception of the figures for NDE, these results re-enforce those found in the responses to the Table of Information Access. A number of factors might account for this. First, NDE is a logical place to look for information, even if knowledge of this, and the expressed intention to do so, does not insure that NDE will actually be contacted. Second, the emphasis of NDE on curriculum consultation is recent, hence, the weaker showing of NDE on the Table, which concentrates on the past two years, may be evidence of a delayed impact. Third, the strong showing of NDE on the Open Questions may be a courtesy response, based on the knowledge that NDE was conducting the survey. At any rate, the potential user audience for NDE information resources appears to be fairly large, and therefore what efforts NDE makes at improving its dissemination policy and procedures will probably find a receptive audience.

The most noteworthy result is the evidence of an already developed dissemination network among the educators themselves. It suggests that any design of a statewide dissemination system must take this network as one of its major components. It also suggests any effective, direct dissemination will have a considerable indirect effect. That is, getting good quality information to a few educators will indirectly get that information to other educators who, as a matter of practice, seek out other educators first as a source of information. Further, the introduction of special training in dissemination techniques or in knowledge utilization for selected educators will likewise spread through the informatl network, provided, of course, that the training is truly practical.

Overall

The dominant types of information obtained and sought after by Nebraska educators are on teaching methods and educational materials. The what and how concerning the programs of the LEA's curriculum are the main concern.

Communication with other educators and other school districts, that is, other LEA personnel is the major source of information for Nebraska educators. After this, they tend to look equally toward colleges and universities where available, written materials, e.g. books, journals memoranda, and the Nebraska Department of Education. Information clearinghouses are an infrequent source of information. The average value of the information obtained from the sources and the accessibility of those sources tends to correlate positively with the usage rates, with the exceptions to be noted in the category profiles.

The majority of information is desired quickly, but a goodly proportion is desired in the intermediate future, probably reflecting a fair amount of planning activity of Nebraska educators.

Of the information flowing through the system, there are sporadic pockets of considerable variability in the quality, for instance, State and Federal program information for superintendents, information from journals and publications for principals, and educational materials information for secondary teachers.

Nebraska educators also find the in-service/workshop concept their most preferred form of information service. Some indication was given that a system compiling and delivering information upon request would have a sizable user audience.

Superintendents

The majority of the problems with which superintendents are dealing are management problems; the key ones being finance and budgeting, and forms and reporting. With regard to their staff, they are concerned with staff evaluation and negotiations. The dominant type of information they expressly ask for is statewide budgetary statistics, although they receive a lot of information on school management strategies, but quite varied information on State and Federal programs. They make the most pronounced and frequent use of NDE.

Principals

The dominant problems for principals are: The Title programs; school law, most likely concerning students discipline and management; staff evaluation and utilization; and curriculum review, revision, and development, especially concerning programs for the gifted.

They have received considerable information on teaching methods and educational materials, the quality of the former was consistently good, while the quality of the latter was varied.

The information they are seeking corresponds well to their problems. They desire considerable legal information, especially concerning the the Title programs. They would like evaluated lists of teacher evaluation methods and of curriculums; and they are also looking for information on student management.

Elementary Teachers

The major problems of elementary teachers involve program and methods, the special cases being the Bicentennial theme, science programs, language arts methods, and dealing with special education students in regular classrooms. Student behavior problems are also a significant concern.

They have received an overwhelming amount of information on teaching methods and educational materials and desire more of the same. Specifically they are looking for Bicentennial ideas and would like evaluated lists of language arts teaching strategies and materials.

They have little contact with NDE but would like to have local subject matter specialists available.

Secondary Teachers

Secondary teachers are less concerned with teaching methods than are elementary teachers, but are correspondingly more concerned with program, specifically updating their subject matter speciality and general curriculum revision. Again language arts is the major subject matter area mentioned. Student behavior problems are still a concern.

Correspondingly, they wanted more information on educational materials, especially evaluated lists of language arts teaching strategies and materials. The information they have received on educational materials is quite varied in quality. They also have preference for local subject matter specialists.

Counselors

Counselors appear to be involved in the greatest variety of problems and projects. They seem to have something of a "trouble-shooting" status in LEA's. Their dominant common problems involve career education and individualizing instruction.

They tend to be seeking lists of films on career education and samples of individualized curriculums. Unlike most other categories, they tend to find information obtained from other educators to be quite varied in quality.

Media Specialists

The dominant problem of media specialists is the selection of materials, and correspondingly they have received and are seeking a predominance of information on educational materials, especially in the form of review catalogs of media materials with recommendations. A secondary concern is the utilization of media centers, and correspondingly, they are looking for information on utilization strategies.

Resource and Special Education Personnel

These persons also deal with a wide variety of problems. The one common denominator is a diagnostic one, placing children into appropriate programs. Consequently, they are seeking evaluated lists of diagnostic methods and corresponding research.